

SENATE BILL 2258
By Dixon

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 37, relative to juvenile offenders.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 37, Chapter 1, is amended by adding Sections 2 and 3 as a new part.

SECTION 2. The administrative office of the courts shall develop a standardized assessment system for juvenile offenders, which shall include the establishment of a risk assessment advisory committee. Such committee shall consist of juvenile justice professionals, including members of the juvenile and family law judiciary, and lay persons.

SECTION 3.

(a) The risk assessment system shall focus on the risk that juvenile offenders will reoffend, appropriate treatment for juvenile offenders, and shall create a classification system for juvenile offenders.

(b) The system is intended to accomplish the following:

- (1) Promote consistent case management decisions;
- (2) Reduce inequities in case-handling;
- (3) Protect public safety;
- (4) Optimize resource allocation;
- (5) Assist with distribution of staff workload; and
- (6) Provide data regarding the type and amount of community and court services

needed to address juvenile offender issues.

(c) The system shall utilize the following three (3) interactive elements in making its assessments and classifications:

(1) A risk assessment scale that will assess the relative likelihood that a juvenile offender will reoffend;

(2) A classification matrix that will link offenders with different offense types and risk levels to a set of graduated sanctions designed to reduce the likelihood of reoffending; and

(3) A needs assessment scale that identifies the type and seriousness of psychological needs presented by juvenile offenders and directs attention to treatment planning and resource development.

(d) The system shall utilize a system of automation that includes the following elements:

(1) An automated secured central repository which is accessible to juvenile and family court professionals allowing them to track juvenile offenders across circuit boundaries;

(2) Collection and disposition of information for future case-management decisions and administrative planning; and

(3) Interactive, on-line risk and needs assessment of juvenile offenders; and

(4) A classification matrix which provides a set of graduated sanctions for a given risk classification and offense severity for the user.

SECTION 4. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.